

December 17, 2003

Robert C. Bonner, Commissioner  
U.S. Customs and Border Protection  
Department of Homeland Security  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20229

Dear Commissioner Bonner:

I am writing to invite you to send a team of decision makers to study Rochester's fast ferry terminal in person. With the recent news that the Toronto Port Authority will fund a ferry terminal, the Rochester to Toronto fast ferry appears likely to launch as planned in May 2004. However, I remain concerned that with this date fast approaching, Customs and Border Protection has not taken the needed steps to ensure that adequate staffing will be committed to what will likely be a heavily-traveled connection between the United States and Canada.

Adequate Customs and Border Protection staffing is critical to the success of this project. With that in mind, I am requesting that a team from your agency study Rochester's fast ferry terminal in person and review the anticipated traffic in order to determine proper staffing levels. I believe that the only way to fully appreciate the elaborate staffing needs of the facility is to see it first-hand.

After our discussions earlier this year, you wrote me a letter assuring me that your agency is committed to staffing this facility properly so as to minimize the amount of time required to process an incoming ferry. I thank you for that commitment, and believe that we would all benefit by sorting out the many issues that need to be solved before the ferry can successfully launch.

Again, thank you for your interest in this project, and I very much appreciate the attention you have given this matter. If I may be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely

Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator